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Royal Commission

into the Management of Police Informants

STATEMENT OF ^{Crescent-O}

1. My full name is ^{Crescent-O} I hold the rank of [REDACTED] at Victoria Police, and am attached to the [REDACTED]
2. I make this statement in response to a request from the Royal Commission into the Management of Police Informants dated 23 May 2019. This statement is produced to the Royal Commission in response to a Notice to Produce.

Questions 1-2

Educational background and employment history (Q 1)

3. I joined Victoria Police in 197[REDACTED] and graduated from the Police Academy in 197[REDACTED]. A summary of my employment history since that time is set out below:
 - (a) in 197[REDACTED] I was a Constable stationed at [REDACTED] and at [REDACTED] West;
 - (b) in 1976, I was stationed at [REDACTED] and was later promoted to Senior Constable;
 - (c) in 1978, I transferred to the [REDACTED] and performed surveillance duties;
 - (d) between 1980 and 1983, I was stationed at [REDACTED] CIB and [REDACTED] CIB;
 - (e) in 1985, I was promoted to Sergeant and stationed at [REDACTED];
 - (f) in 1987, I was posted to the [REDACTED];
 - (g) in 1989, I returned to [REDACTED] CIB; and

- (h) in 1995, I was promoted Detective Senior Sergeant at the State Crimes Squad and held the position of Surveillance Manager (the State Crimes Squad later became I&CS).
4. I have undertaken Victoria Police qualifications and training including the following:
- (a) Sub Officer Course;
 - (b) Detective Training School;
 - (c) Senior Sergeant Course;
 - (d) Prosecutors Course; and
 - (e) Inspector Qualifying Course.

Involvement or association with any investigation which had dealings with Ms Gobbo (Q 2)

5. I&CS was asked to conduct surveillance on Ms Gobbo on a number of occasions between 2005 and 2018. In my capacity as Surveillance Manager, I was involved with some of these surveillance requests.
6. The I&CS Surveillance Unit (the SSU) is managed by a Detective Inspector. In 2005, two Detective Senior Sergeants, of which I was one, managed operations. The other was Detective Senior Sergeant O'Connor. We reported to the Detective Inspector.
7. The role of the SSU is to receive applications for surveillance from Victoria Police investigators. My role was to:
- (a) receive and approve requests for surveillance;
 - (b) to allocate resources for surveillance tasks; and
 - (c) to liaise with the requesting investigator.
8. I shared these responsibilities with DSS O'Connor.
9. The usual practice with surveillance requests was as follows:
- (a) a surveillance application would be completed by the relevant investigator and lodged with the SSU;

- (b) the application would include the details of the person of interest, their associations, known vehicles, known addresses and what the investigator was endeavouring to achieve (for example, identifying associates, [REDACTED] identifying vehicles the person of interest used and intelligence gathering etc);
 - (c) I (or DSS O'Connor), would review the request and either approve it, or ask the investigators for further information prior to approving it;
 - (d) once the request was approved, I (or DSS O'Connor), liaised with the relevant investigators about the specific surveillance requirements;
 - (e) appropriate resources were then allocated to the request;
 - (f) the relevant SSU crew would then carry out the surveillance request;
 - (g) the results of the surveillance (whether successful or not) were recorded by the SSU crew in a running log sheet, which was completed at the end of the shift and entered into our database; and
 - (h) the surveillance log was then shared with the relevant investigator, if requested.
10. It was standard practice that I would liaise with the investigator about the surveillance request. The information allowed the SSU to properly plan the surveillance and assess the risks associated with the surveillance request. The SSU had no direct involvement in the investigation itself. Its role was limited to conducting surveillance and reporting the results of that surveillance.
- Surveillance request from late 2005***
11. The first occasion on which I recall receiving a surveillance request relating to Ms Gobbo was in late 2005. To the best of my recollection, this was the first time that I had heard of Ms Gobbo.
12. The request did not make any reference to her being a human source, nor would I have expected it to. I did not need to know whether a surveillance person of interest was a human source or not, nor did my crews. However, I did need to know the identity of the person the SSU crew was required to conduct surveillance on.
13. The request formed part of *Operation Posse*, which was an investigation into associates of Tony Mokbel. Each associate was allocated a number. I believe that Ms Gobbo was *Posse 5*.

14. The request was approved and carried out. To the best of my recollection, surveillance was carried out on Ms Gobbo approximately six times over a period of about two weeks in fulfilment of this request.
15. In the course of preparing this statement, I was shown five informer contact reports, four from 25 January 2006, and one from 27 January 2006, each of which contains a reference to me. These contact reports indicate to me that the SSU, under my supervision (or DSS O'Connor), was carrying out surveillance on either Ms Gobbo or the person she was meeting on those dates.
16. To the best of my recollection, I was not aware, in January 2006, that Ms Gobbo was a registered human source, or that she was providing information to Victoria Police. I knew only that she was a person whom the SSU had been asked to conduct surveillance on.
17. My diary records that on 3 January 2006, I met with Senior Sergeant O'Brien about *Operation Posse*. I do not specifically recall the discussion, but my diary notes are consistent with the meeting being a discussion about the resources required for the surveillance of *Operation Posse* targets. I do not recall if Ms Gobbo was discussed specifically in this meeting.

Events of June 2006

18. In the course of preparing this statement, I was shown an entry from a source management log from 5 June 2006 which reads:

Meet with Super. Biggin, DDI Woolfe, S/Sgt's O'Connor and ^{Crescent-O} TB to report matter to ESD. Probable that ^{Crescent-O} disclose Strathmore lab to associates. Agreed SSU to receive target application from. Purana re 3838 in attempt to camouflage assistance to police by painting same as a target. SSU not sure if ^{Crescent-O} known of 3838 assistance.

19. I have no corresponding diary entry for this meeting. Despite the source management log entry, I have no recollection of this discussion.
20. On 13 June 2006, I attended a meeting with Superintendent Biggin, ^{Richards-O} SS O'Connor and Officer Sandy White. My diary does not record the purpose of the meeting, and I do not independently recall the discussion.
21. I have been shown an entry from the diary of Superintendent Biggin for 13 June 2006, which reads:

Insp Woolfe, S/Sgt O'Connor ^{Crescent-O} Officer Sandy White ^{Richards-O} re ESD/TPA (SSU) issue – implications for HS 3838

22. That entry has not refreshed my memory about the contents of the discussion of 13 June 2006.

Presenting at Human Source Management Course

23. During 2007, I presented at the Human Source Management Course. My session was about [REDACTED]

Telephone intercept summaries – 21 August 2007

24. In the course of preparing this statement, I was shown an email from Sergeant James Common, who was an Intelligence Officer at I&CS, to Superintendent Biggin, dated 21 August 2007 and attaching telephone intercept summaries in relation to operations "AGAMAS/LAVERNOCK/INCA". I was copied to Sergeant Common's email. It has been drawn to my attention that those telephone intercept summaries contain references to Ms Gobbo. I have no recollection of the email, or of reading the telephone intercept summaries.

Cancelled request – August 2007

25. On 31 August 2007, I received an email from Officer Sandy White. It states in part "Starting point [REDACTED] I responded to Officer Sandy White asking him who the contact from his office was, and what their mobile number was. Later that same day, Officer Sandy White responded to my email and informed me that he no longer needed help [REDACTED]"
26. I do not recall these emails, but I infer from reading them that Officer Sandy White's team had made an urgent request for surveillance [REDACTED] later cancelled.

Events of 2008

27. On 14 March 2008, I received a telephone call from Officer Black re ^{Officer Esplanade} was the nickname for ^{Officer Esplanade} one of the crew leaders in the SSU. My diary entry for this call reads as follows:

1440 Officer Black
 [Telephone number appears]
 re ^{Officer Esplanade}
 meeting with Purana
 had meeting with Andrew G
 ^{Officer Esplanade} [indecipherable]
 Buick's mob that
 crew of dogs already there.
 not ssu
 other dogs were there & left

Rung John Nibblet re Gobbo from
 Source Unit
 Officer Esplanade rang Gutske & says
 he cannot get start on Gatto
 - not to worry about it.
 Lygon Street meeting other dogs.

28. I have been shown Officer Black's log entry relating to this call.
29. I infer from reading these entries that the call related to a tasking from the night of 13 May 2008 in which Officer Esplanade had lost contact with the person of interest (Mick Gatto) and had reported that a second surveillance crew ('dogs') had also been tasked to the meeting.

Operation Collar Surveillance Request

30. I have been shown a copy of the minutes of a Purana Taskforce T&C from 1 September 2008. Those minutes include an update about *Operation Collar* (1B). A notation from 1 September 2008 makes reference to a request forwarded to me at the SSU. I do not recall the request, but do not doubt that it was sent. I have no knowledge of the source of the information that led to the surveillance request.

Surveillance Request - 2018

31. In 2018 the SSU was requested to conduct surveillance on Ms Gobbo because she was going to [REDACTED] Prison to visit someone and there were concerns for her safety. I do not think I got the request directly. However, I recall that the request was that she was in danger from criminal elements and the SSU's role was to make sure that there was no one following her.
32. The SSU was not given location details. Instead, the SSU was directed to locate the vehicle she was in [REDACTED] and were given [REDACTED] we could commence surveillance. Surveillance was conducted [REDACTED] and the crew broke contact [REDACTED]

How I learned, or were given reason to believe, Ms Gobbo was providing information to police (Q 3)

33. Prior to preparing this statement, I believed that I learned that Ms Gobbo was providing information to Victoria Police from the media.
34. However, on the basis of documents shown to me in the course of preparing this statement, I believe that I must have had some knowledge that Ms Gobbo was providing information to Victoria Police from around June 2006.

35. I have no recollection of who told me, when I was told or the circumstances in which I was told, that Ms Gobbo was providing information to Victoria Police.

Awareness of others (Q 4)

36. I have no direct knowledge of other members of Victoria Police members or other organisations who were aware that Ms Gobbo was providing information or assistance to Victoria Police. On the basis of the documents I reviewed in the course of preparing this statement, I believe that the following people had, or may have had, such knowledge:

- (a) Superintendent Biggin;
- (b) Senior Sergeant O'Connor;
- (c) Detective Inspector Woolfe;
- (d) Officer Sandy White; and
- (e) **Officer Esplanade**

Authorisation of the use of Ms Gobbo as a human source (Q 5)

37. I do not know who was involved in the authorisation and continued authorisation of Ms Gobbo as a human source.

Personal contact with Ms Gobbo (Q 6)

38. I did not have any personal contact with Ms Gobbo.

Information & assistance received (Q7 & Q8)

39. Save as set out in response to questions 2 and 3, I have no knowledge of any information or assistance given by Ms Gobbo to Victoria Police.

Concerns raised as to the use of a legal practitioner as a human source (Q9)

40. I have no knowledge of any concerns being raised about the use of a legal practitioner as a human source.

Concerns raised as to the use of Ms Gobbo as a human source (Q10)

41. I have no knowledge of any concerns being raised about the use of Ms Gobbo as a human source.

Awareness about disclosure in relation to Ms Gobbo (Q11)

42. I am not aware of any such disclosure.

Other human sources with obligations of confidentiality or privilege (question 12)

43. I am not aware of any other human sources with obligations of confidentiality or privilege.

Training (question 13)

44. I received training on the various topics in question 13 throughout my police career. My recollection of the training I received is as follows:

- (a) Police Academy;
- (b) Detective Training School;
- (c) Senior Sergeants Course; and
- (d) Prosecutors Course.

Other information (question 14)

45. I have no further information to provide.

Dated: 11 October 2019

Crescent-O

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